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NEIL A DUCHEZ
RENNER OTTO BOISSELLE & SKLAR PLL
1621 EUCLID AVENUE
19TH FLOOR
CLEVELAND, OH 44115

EXAMINER	
TRAN, DOUGLAS Q	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
2624	8

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/456,670	SHIMAZAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Douglas Q. Tran	2624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *27 May 2003* .

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,5,6 and 8-10* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,5-6,8-10* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 5-6, 8, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Yamamoto et al. (US Patent No. 5,652,830) and Ikenoue et al. (US Patent No. 5,671,277).

As to claim 1, Yamamoto teaches an image forming apparatus (i.e., a printer in fig. 18) for forming an image based on image data inputted from an arbitrary image output apparatus (i.e., a host computer in fig. 18; col. 30, lines 13-21: one of printers receives the print data from one of host computers and forms an image in steps of S108 and S119 in fig. 20), the image forming apparatus performing:

a judging process of judging whether identification information (i.e., an ID code is entered and matched with the ID code) has been inputted together with the image data (col. 31, lines 8-11; and also with host machine identification "col. 30, lines 52-56") from an arbitrary output apparatus (i.e., one of the host machines in fig. 18),

(it is noted that, col. 31, lines 28-29 and 63-67, a judgment process of judging whether an ID code is entered through the ID input section and whether the entered ID code is matched with the ID code stored in the memory 102. The ID code has been inputted together with host machine identification and print data "col. 30, lines 52-56 and col. 31, lines 8-11" are sent to a

printer for print out. The host machine number would be also considered as identification information of the output apparatus);

an image formation process (in step of S119 in fig. 20) is performed to form an image based on the image data only when the identification information (i.e., an ID code) has been inputted together with image data (it is noted that because the printer performs the printing out for the confidential print data send from the host machine, the printer would perform to form an image based on image data only when the printer receives the ID code has been inputted together with image data from the host machine "col. 31, lines 8-11"; and the process further for forming the image only occurs when the ID code is confirmed at the input section 106 "col. 31, line 63 to col. 32, line 10").

Although Yamamoto teaches identification information, The ID code and host machine identification, is inputted together with image data, Yamamoto does not teach identification information of an output apparatus is included as part of the inputted image data.

Ikenoue teaches the identification information of an output apparatus is included as part of the inputted image data (col. 6, table 1 shows additional data includes identification information such as user name, password number, output device "col. 6, lines 2-3 and col. 5, lines 29-34".

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the judging process in Yamamoto for judging whether the identification information of an output apparatus is included as part of the inputted image data as taught by Ikenoue. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of Yamamoto can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by Ikenoue because the modified

printing system of Yamamoto would be flexible and faster but also confidential by performing to form an image data only when the identification information of the host computer in the network is determined from the judging process.

As to claim 5, Yamamoto teaches an image forming apparatus (i.e., a printer in fig. 18) for forming an image based on image data inputted from an arbitrary image output apparatus (i.e., a host computer in fig. 18; col. 30, lines 13-21: one of printers receives the print data from one of host computers and forms an image in steps of S108 and S119 in fig. 20), the image forming apparatus performing:

a judging process of judging whether identification information (i.e., an ID code is entered and matched with the ID code) has been inputted together with the image data (col. 31, lines 8-11; and also with host machine identification "col. 30, lines 52-56") from an arbitrary output apparatus (i.e., one of the host machines in fig. 18),

(it is noted that, col. 31, lines 28-29 and 63-67, a judgment process of judging whether an ID code is entered through the ID input section and whether the entered ID code is matched with the ID code stored in the memory 102. The ID code has been inputted together with host machine identification and print data "col. 30, lines 52-56 and col. 31, lines 8-11" are sent to a printer for print out. The host machine number would be also considered as identification information of the output apparatus);

an image formation process (in step of S119 in fig. 20) is performed to form an image based on the image data only when the identification information (i.e., an ID code) has been inputted together with image data (it is noted that because the printer performs the printing out

for the confidential print data send from the host machine, the printer would perform to form an image based on image data only when the printer receives the ID code has been inputted together with image data from the host machine "col. 31, lines 8-11"; and the process further for forming the image only occurs when the ID code is confirmed at the input section 106 "col. 31, line 63 to col. 32, line 10").

Although Yamamoto teaches identification information, The ID code and host machine identification, is inputted together with image data, Yamamoto does not teach the image formation process is performed to form an image based on the image data on a portion of which image data of an identification pattern representing the identification information is superimposed, and when the identification information which identifies the image output apparatus is inputted as a piece of data which is different from the image data and an attachment thereto, an image of an identification pattern representing the identification information is created and the created image is superimposed on a portion of the image formed based on the inputted image data.

Ikenoue teaches the image formation process is performed to form an image based on the image data on a portion of which image data of an identification pattern representing the identification information is superimposed, and when the identification information of an output apparatus is different from image data and attachment thereto (col. 6, table 1 shows additional data includes identification information such as user name, password number, output device "col. 6, lines 2-3 and col. 5, lines 29-34"), an image of an identification pattern representing the identification information is created and the created image is superimposed on a portion of the image formed based on the inputted image data (col. 5, lines 51-54 and 57-61).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the judging process in Yamamoto for judging whether the identification information of an output apparatus is formed and superimposed with the inputted image data as taught by Ikenoue. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of Yamamoto can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by Ikenoue because the modified printing system of Yamamoto would be 1) flexible but also confidential by performing to form an image data only when the identification information of the host computer in the network is formed together with image data.

As to claim 6, Yamamoto teaches an image forming apparatus (i.e., a printer in fig. 18) for forming an image based on image data inputted from an arbitrary image output apparatus (i.e., a host computer in fig. 18; col. 30, lines 13-21: one of printers receives the print data from one of host computers and forms an image in steps of S108 and S119 in fig. 20), the image forming apparatus performing:

a judging process of judging whether identification information (i.e., an ID code is entered and matched with the ID code) has been inputted together with the image data (col. 31, lines 8-11; and also with host machine identification "col. 30, lines 52-56") from an arbitrary output apparatus (i.e., one of the host machines in fig. 18),

(it is noted that, col. 31, lines 28-29 and 63-67, a judgment process of judging whether an ID code is entered through the ID input section and whether the entered ID code is matched with the ID code stored in the memory 102. The ID code has been inputted together with host machine identification and print data "col. 30, lines 52-56 and col. 31, lines 8-11" are sent to a

printer for print out. The host machine number would be also considered as identification information of the output apparatus);

an image formation process (in step of S119 in fig. 20) is performed to form an image based on the image data only when the identification information (i.e., an ID code) has been inputted together with image data (it is noted that because the printer performs the printing out for the confidential print data send from the host machine, the printer would perform to form an image based on image data only when the printer receives the ID code has been inputted together with image data from the host machine "col. 31, lines 8-11"; and the process further for forming the image only occurs when the ID code is confirmed at the input section 106 "col. 31, line 63 to col. 32, line 10").

Although Yamamoto teaches identification information, The ID code and host machine identification, is inputted together with image data, Yamamoto does not teach the image formation process is performed to form an image based on the image data on a portion of which image data of an identification pattern representing the identification information is superimposed (col. 6, table 1 shows additional data includes identification information such as user name, password number, output device "col. 6, lines 2-3 and col. 5, lines 29-34"), and a further process is performed in which an image of an identification pattern representing identification information which identifies the image forming apparatus itself is created and the created image is superimposed on a portion of the image formed based on the inputted image data (col. 5, lines 51-54 and 57-61).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the judging process in Yamamoto for judging whether the

identification information of an output apparatus is formed and superimposed with the inputted image data as taught by Ikenoue. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of Yamamoto can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by Ikenoue because the modified printing system of Yamamoto would be 1) flexible but also confidential by performing to form an image data only when the identification information of the host computer in the network is formed together with image data.

As to claim 8, Yamamoto and Ikenoue disclose every feature discussed in claim 6, and Ikenoue further teaches the identification pattern representing identification information which identifies the image forming apparatus is formed at positions not overlapping or near an edge with the identification pattern representing identification information which identifies the image output apparatus (please see table 2 in col. 15 indicates a list of the information of identification information including input and output information which is formed on the image data and it is noted that each information should be formed at positions not overlapping).

As to claim 10, Yamamoto and Ikenoue disclose every feature discussed in claim 6, and Ikenoue further teaches a pattern image indicating an input/output status of the image data is included between the identification patterns representing identification information of the output apparatus and the forming apparatus (please see table 2 in col. 15)

3. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Yamamoto and Ikenoue, in view of claim 5, and in combination with Hisatomi et al. (US Patent No. 6,342,954 B1).

As to claim 9, Yamamoto and Ikenoue disclose every feature discussed in claim 5.

However, the combination of Yamamoto and Ikenoue does not teach the identification pattern is formed near an edge of the image.

Hisatomi teaches the image formation process (i.e., from an image printer 112 in fig. 1) is performed to form a superimposed image (col. 3, lines 42-43) wherein the identification pattern is formed near an edge of the image (bar code; the bar code superimposes with an image of specific page in fig. 6 and 7) (col. 3, lines 38-42: the identification information for identifying a predetermined electronic document file stored in the storage means is superimposed on image information of a specific page of that file by the image superimposing and outputting means. It is clearly noted that, col. 6, lines 12-24, the CPU reads out the file name of the file as storage location information and converts it into a bar code. The bar code may be a character string. Then the CPU take out the first page of the image being read out and superimposes the bar code on the image of the cover page to form a superimposed image; and this superimposed image is printed out through the image printer 112).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the image formation process of the combination of Yamamoto and Ikenoue for forming the superimposed image in which the image data is superimposed with identification pattern representing the identification information as taught by Hisatomi. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of Yamamoto and Ikenoue can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by Hisatomi because the modified image formation process of Yamamoto and Ikenoue would be more confidential when the identification information is recorded together with the inputted image data on the recording medium. Therefore, the operator at the printer can recognize who or where the recorded products belong.

Conclusion

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 5-6, 8-10 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. This action is made **non-final**.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Douglas Q. Tran whose telephone number is (703) 305-4857 or E-mail address is Douglas.tran@uspto.gov.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4700.

Douglas Q. Tran
Oct. 07, 2003

GABRIEL GARCIA
PRIMARY EXAMINER